

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MOSCOW 06548 121314Z
ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 COME-00
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SS-15 STR-04 CEA-01 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 L-03
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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7293
INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 6548

DEPT PASS COMMERCE AND TREASURY

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ETRD, PFOR UR US
SUBJECT: US/USSR TRADE AND ECONOMIC COUNCIL "UNANIMOUS RESOLUTUION"

REF: MOSCOW A-379, DEC 23, 1976

1. WE HAVE JUST RECEIVED THE FEBRUARY/MARCH ISSUE OF THE JOURNAL OF THE US-USSR TRADE AND ECONOMIC COUNCIL, WHICH IS DEVOTED TO LAST YEAR'S COUNCIL MEETING IN MOSCOW.

2. WE NOTE THAT ISSUE CARRIES "THE UNANIMOUS RESOLUTION EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE MEETING" AFFIRMING SUPPORT FOR THE TRADE AGREEMENT OF 1972 "WITH PARTICULAR EMPHASIS ON UNCONDITIONAL RECIPROCAL MFN TARIFF TREATMENT." WHILE WE DO NOT KNOW THE ORIGINS OF THE ADJECTIVE "UNCONDITIONAL," IT WAS NOT INCLUDED IN ORIGINAL SCOTT DRAFT SHOWN TO US LAST NOVEMBER (SEE REFAIR, P. 12), AND WE ASSUME IT WAS ADDED DURING "EDITING" PHASE EITHER AT OR FOLLOWING THE SESSION. IN TECHNICAL SENSE, THE WORD "UNCONDITIONAL" MAY OF COURSE BE TRACED TO 1972 TRADE ACT,

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ARTICLE I(MFN, ETC) OF WHICH BEGINS, "EACH GOVERNMENT SHALL ACCORDING UNCONDITIONALLY..." IN THE CONTEMPORARY CONTEXT, HOWEVER, "UNCONDITIONAL" STRIKES US AS GRATUITOUS (SINCE COMMITMENT OT MFN WOULD BE AS VALID WITHOUT IT) AND UNHELPFUL INEVENTUALLY WORKING OUT SOME INFORMAL COMPROMISE WHICH MIGHT SATISFY CONGRESSIONAL MAJORITY.

3. WHILE WE WOULD NOT WISH TO SEE US SIDE SPEAK OVERTLY OF "UNCONDITIONAL" EXTENSION OF MFN, WE DO NOT SEE ANY PRESENT PROSPECT OF ACHIEVING THIS RESULT WITHOUT SOME VERY PRACTICAL CONDITIONS HAVING BEEN AGREED ON IN SOME FORM BY THE SOVIET SIDE. THREE YEAR EXTENSION OF MFN WAS IN ANY CASE SUCH A "CONDITION." WHILE NEVER SPEAKING OF "CONDITIONS," THEREFORE, WE BELIEVE WE SHOULD NEVERTHELESS ALWAYS BE THINKING WHAT THEY MIGHT BE. USE OF TERM "UNCONDITIONAL," IN OUR VIEW, IS TO BE AVOIDED. WE CONTINUE TO BELIEVE IT WOULD BE MOST SUPPORTIVE OF OBJECTIVES WHICH WE BELIEVE BUSINESSMEN SHARE WITH US THAT THOSE WHO FAVOR MFN AND RESTORATION OF EXPORT-IMPORT BANK CREDITS FOR USSR REFRAIN FROM USING TERMINOLOGY WHICH COULD ENCOURAGE SOVIETS TO BELIEVE THEY CAN ATTAIN THESE OBJECTIVES WITHOUT ANY COMPROMISE AND THUS FURTHER COMPLICATE A POSSIBLE SOLUTION TO THE ISSUE.
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